On this same interesting subject, a correspondent of the *Athenæum*, who dates his letter the 18th of last month, writes as follows:—

"In two years, as Herr Zwirner *showed* us, the nave, aisles, and transept of the cathedral may be thrown open—not, in truth, to the entire height; but complete to a level above the clerestory windows. The vaulting of the side-aisles will be then completed; and a temporary roof will be easily placed over the central portion,—leaving, within, the upper part of the walls, vaults, &c., to be raised:—without, the flying buttresses, pinnacles, and other garnitures are a more serious business. The raising of the transept walls to their present important height, Herr Zwirner assured us, was a heavier two years' task than what remains to be done in realization of a scheme so attractive to the fancy. Moreover, the casual visitor is little aware of the vast collection of ornamental sculptures, ready to be placed, which the workshops contain. The canopies round the retreating portal of the northern transept are already fixed; the capitals of the pillars of the clerestory gallery are waiting by the score. Let not my statement mislead any one into imagining a case of *manufacture*. The old capricious variety of fancies in ornament, has been as religiously carried out as every other intimation of the nameless architect's intention. The small grotesque figures at the angles of the canopies aforesaid (which are merely shelters for statues of saints, angels, &c.,) are as minutely finished and whimsically diversified, as if they could be seen without the aid of an opera-glass when they shall be raised to their destined position. The foliage, again, of the capitals has the sharpness of the best period of cutting. No two devices are alike. The stone used for these more delicate portions is of peculiarly fine and close quality—from Rochefort. Nothing seems slighted or overlooked; and the workmen, of course, become more skilful as they proceed, and fuller of spirit and invention. A growing confidence that all this labour is not to be in vain as regards the grand result, probably animates those who have contributed to a scheme so magnificent, but for a long time deemed so visionary. Windows are beginning to drop in. The King of Bavaria's donation of *six* for one of the side aisles will be ready in 1848; and then, it is said, the spell is to be broken—the wall thrown down betwixt nave and choir, with splendid festive ceremonies. This will give an immense impetus to popular feeling.

VENICE.

"All the time I was at Venice," says Mrs. Jameson, in her last pleasant 'Essay on Art,' "I was in a rage with Canaletti. I could not come upon a palace, or a church, or a corner of a canal which I had not seen in one or other of his pictures. At every moment I was reminded of him. But how has he painted Venice? Just as we have the face of a beloved friend re-produced by the daguerréotype, or by some bad conscientious painter—some fellow who gives us eyes, nose, and mouth by measure of compass, and leaves out all sentiment, all countenance; we cannot deny the identity, and we cannot endure it. Where in Canaletti are the glowing evening skies, the transparent gleaming waters, the bright green of the vine-shadowed *Traghetto*, the freshness and the glory, the dreamy, aerial, fantastic splendour of this city of the sea? Look at one of his pictures—all is real, opaque, solid, stony, formal—even his skies and water—and is *that* Venice? 'But,' says my friend, 'if you would have Venice, seek it in Turner's pictures!' True, I may seek it, but shall I find it? Venice is like a dream—but this dream upon the canvas, do you call *this* Venice? The exquisite precision of form, the wondrous beauty of detail, the clear, delicate lines of the flying perspective—so sharp and defined in the midst of a flood of brightness—where are they? Canaletti gives us the forms without the colour or light. Turner, the colour and light without the forms. But if you would take into your soul the very soul and inward life and spirit of Venice—breathe the same air—go to Titian; there is more of Venice in his 'Carnaro Family,' or his 'Pesaro Madonna,' than in all the Canalettis in the corridor at Windsor,* Beautiful they are, I must needs say it; but when I think of enchanting Venice, the most beautiful are to me like prose translations of poetry—petrifactions, materialities: 'We start, for life is wanting there!' I know not how it is, but certainly things that would elsewhere displease, delight us at Venice. It has been said, for instance, 'put down the church of St. Mark any where but in the Piazza, it is barbarous:' here, where east and west have met to blend together, it is glorious.'"

* By the way, no one knows Canaletti's art who has not seen this elevated corridor. The collection is matchless.—Ed.

LORD EBRINGTON ON THE ARRANGEMENT AND VENTILATION OF HOUSES.

Lord Ebrington's lecture on the unhealthiness of towns, delivered in the Mechanics' Institution, at Plymouth, has been published by the Health of Towns Association.*

We take from it the following remark, and recommend the whole for wide distribution.

"With regard to ventilation in its largest sense, that of towns; by an improved arrangement of the streets, the expense I acknowledge would be formidable; but when it is remembered how many other useful purposes are effected by making streets straight instead of winding, wide instead of narrow, in continuous lines and free overhead, instead of discontinuous or connected only by archways, some expense would not be—indeed, we see daily proof that it is not—thought ill bestowed, in making our thoroughfares in large towns not only airier, but also drier, lighter, shorter, and more commodious for traffic, more cheerful and more handsome. When it is considered that the breath of human beings alone, exclusive of animals, in the metropolis, discharges into the air sixty tons of carbonic acid and sixty tons of water every day, it will be easier to appreciate the importance to health of allowing the freest access possible, not only to the light of the sun, but also to the purifying winds of heaven. Dr. Duncan, describing the well-like courts and alleys of Liverpool, speaks with enthusiasm of the delight with which he hails a hurricane or thunder-storm. No ordinary breeze has any effect in renovating the atmosphere of spots so completely hemmed in. Indeed, so strongly is the evil of the inevitable deterioration of the air of our enormous metropolis felt, that it is seriously in contemplation to establish villages for the residence of operatives in the neighbourhood of London, from which they would be daily conveyed to their work and back by the railways. The evidence of Captain Vetch as to the best mode of arrangement for the increments of towns is very interesting; as also what he says, and Mr. Butler Williams, on the importance of having accurate surveys made of every town, accessible to all who want them for the purposes of drainage, gas and water supply, &c. He shows the costly blunders and difficulties which result from the absence of such information. It is sufficient to say that additional streets ought to be made as nearly as possible parallel to the exterior lines of the town, with broad continuous communications across them nearly at right angles, and leading straight into the principal thoroughfares.

Now, with respect to the houses themselves, it is essential that they should never be placed back to back, nor even too close to allow of a fairly sized back yard or garden to each, accessible to light and air.

I will only mention one plan which I have adopted myself in building cottages on the estate which I have the management of, namely, the introduction of some air from the outside, through a pipe taken into an iron box at the back of the kitchen fire, whence it is conducted by another tube carried up the corner of the chimney into the bedroom above. In this manner a constant supply of warmed fresh air is furnished to the sleeping-room through a screen of wire gauze, which diffuses it without draught. The extra cost is so trifling, that it is not worth talking about. As a general principle it should be remembered that cold air is heavier than hot, and that consequently the breath and steam of the body, as well as the smoke and vapour from lamps and candles, has a tendency to ascend; the great object, therefore, is to have openings high up in a room. To prove this, Dr. Guy mentions a workshop in two stories without any opening; in the upper, ten out of seventeen, in the lower only one out of fifteen men working there, were affected by disease of the chest. Dr. Arnott, on the other hand, mentions a large sort of barrack at Glasgow, in which all the workmen of a factory lodged, from which fever was never absent. It was rendered quite healthy by carrying a tube from the ceiling of each room into the large factory chimney, the powerful draught of which secured a constant change of air for the inmates.

* C. Knight, London.

New Books.

An Exposition of the Danger of the Present Mode of Railway Construction, with Suggestions for its Improvement. By C. H. Greenhow. Weale.

The points urged in this pamphlet are, that a more perfect adjustment between the wheel and rail than at present exists, is necessary: that the only shape which can really give security under all circumstances, is the convex or round rail and concave tire, assisted by an inwardly inclined spoke, making the wheel in fact a cone, resting with its extreme edge on the rail; and that the tire, without the point on the surface of the rail perpendicular to its centre, ought to be so formed as to secure a perfect accordance between the wheels and the running surface of the rails, should either of them sink below the level of the other, or should the gauge separate so as to increase the distance between them.

A suggestion made by the writer to the effect, that all the carriages running on a railway should be of proportioned dimensions, seems worth consideration.

Gothic Ornaments drawn from existing Authorities. By J. K. Collins, Architect; Bell, Fleet-street. 1846. No. 1.

This promises to be a useful work. The first number contains four plates in lithography, including capitals from the choir of Ely Cathedral, quarter full size; wooden poppy-heads from Paston church, Norfolk, half full size; portions of rood-screen from Ludham Church, Norfolk, portion of mullion of screen, crocket from the canopy of doorway, examples of decorations enriched by gold and colour; and wooden spandrils from North Walsham Church, and Trunch Church, Norfolk, half full size.

We withhold an opinion until the work is further advanced. The date should be given in all cases if possible.

Correspondence.

THE MADNESS OF BUILDERS.

Sir,—On last Friday, at the Sewers Office for the Westminster Division, there were let about 775 lineal feet of 18-inch barrel drain to be built in the line of the Old Ranelagh Sewer at Bayswater. I have taken the liberty of sending you a list of the tenderers and their amounts as a curiosity. I am, Sir, &c.,

July 7, 1846. Candid.

Johnson	£398	0	0
Mathison and Frost	298	17	0
Starkey	196	10	0
Yeomens	170	0	0
Austin	161	10	0

Austin's tender accepted.

The City of Mexico.—In the principal streets the houses are all constructed according to the strictest architectural rules. The foundations of the city were laid, and the first buildings were erected by Cortes, who did every thing well which he attempted,—from building a house or writing a couplet, to conquering an empire. Many of the finest buildings in Mexico are still owned by his descendants. The public square is said to be unsurpassed by any in the world; it contains some twelve or fifteen acres paved with stone. The cathedral covers one entire side, the palace another; the western side is occupied by a row of very high and substantial houses, the second stories of which project into the street the width of the pavement; the lower stories are occupied by the principal retail merchants of the city. The most of these houses were built by Cortes, who, with his characteristic sagacity and an avarice which equally characterised him in the latter part of his life, selected the best portion of the city for himself.—*Thompson's Recollections.*

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